

Dalton's new role... as an actor

TIMOTHY DALTON grins when asked what he drew on to play Neville Sinclair, actor turned Nazi spy, in *The Rocketeer*.

"I thought of the worst things about movie stars and celebrities," he says with a chuckle. "All the vanity and insecurity and believing the bull---, and I put it all into Neville Sinclair!"

James Bond star Dalton, 45, is about as far away from Sinclair as you can get and says being a dedicated actor has nothing to do with being famous.

"We're sort of led to believe by the press that most actors believe all their own publicity," he says.

"Whether it's true or not, I don't know. But I know insanity lies that way and you can't be a good actor unless you are rooted in reality.

"If you surround yourself with bodyguards and see the world through shadowed glass in a limo, how do you play ordinary people?"

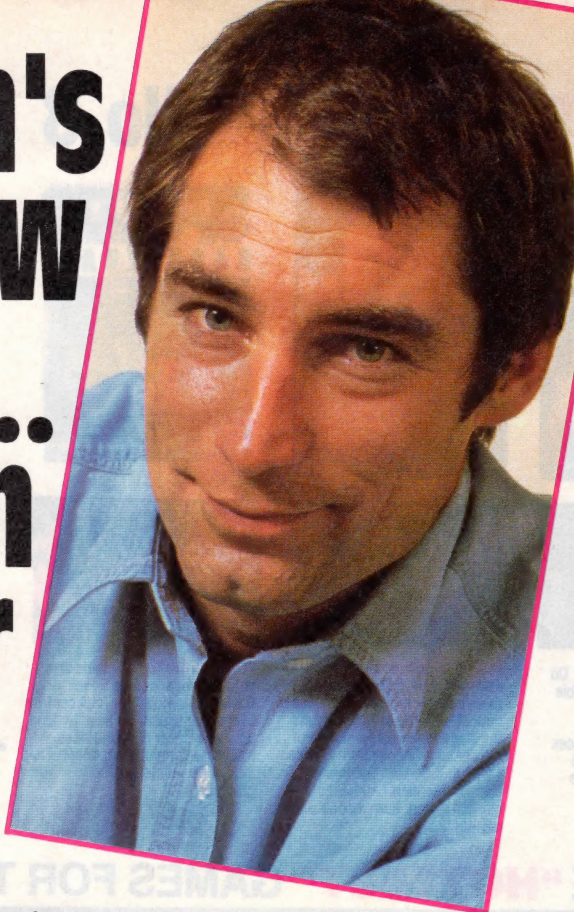
Born in Colwyn Bay, North Wales, Dalton decided on an acting career at the age of 16 after seeing his first play, an Old Vic production of *Macbeth*. He became a member of the National Youth Theatre and later studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts before beginning a prestigious career on the stage and, later, in movies, including two Bond films, *The Living Daylights* and *Licence to Kill*.

In *The Rocketeer*, Neville Sinclair will stop at nothing to get a secret rocket pack which young pilot Cliff Secord (Bill Campbell) finds under the seat of his plane.

Dalton says he has little in common with the egotistical actor he plays.

"Neville was interesting because he was a villain and an actor," he says. "The man is two-faced but, because he's an actor, he can put on a great performance and get away with it."

Despite being a household name,



The careers of two unknowns have suddenly blasted off... and so has their real-life love affair

THERE was Superman, Batman, Dick Tracy ... and, now, *The Rocketeer*.

The \$40 million Disney film, now screening in Australia, is the latest to bring a comic-book hero to the big screen.

The Rocketeer is young aviator Cliff Secord, played by Bill Campbell, who finds an experimental rocket pack which enables him to fly.

The Nazis, the government and

little is known about Dalton's personal life, although he has long been linked with Vanessa Redgrave.

"It's not something I'm interested in talking about," he says with a shrug.

Friends say he and Redgrave remain close friends, although geography suggests they are no longer "an item".

"I have a house in Los Angeles but I wouldn't say I live here," Dalton says.

"I live where I'm working. I've been in L.A. nearly a year making *The Rocketeer* and before that I was four months in Italy and then doing a Bond movie in Mexico."

Dalton was scheduled to play the title role in *Christopher Columbus: The Discovery*, about to begin production, but has pulled out of the project.

There are no comments on reports he will sue producers Alexander and Broccoli (Cubby, producer of the Bond films) is suing MGM, and until that lawsuit is resolved, there can't be another Bond film.

And the next Bond film is on hold.

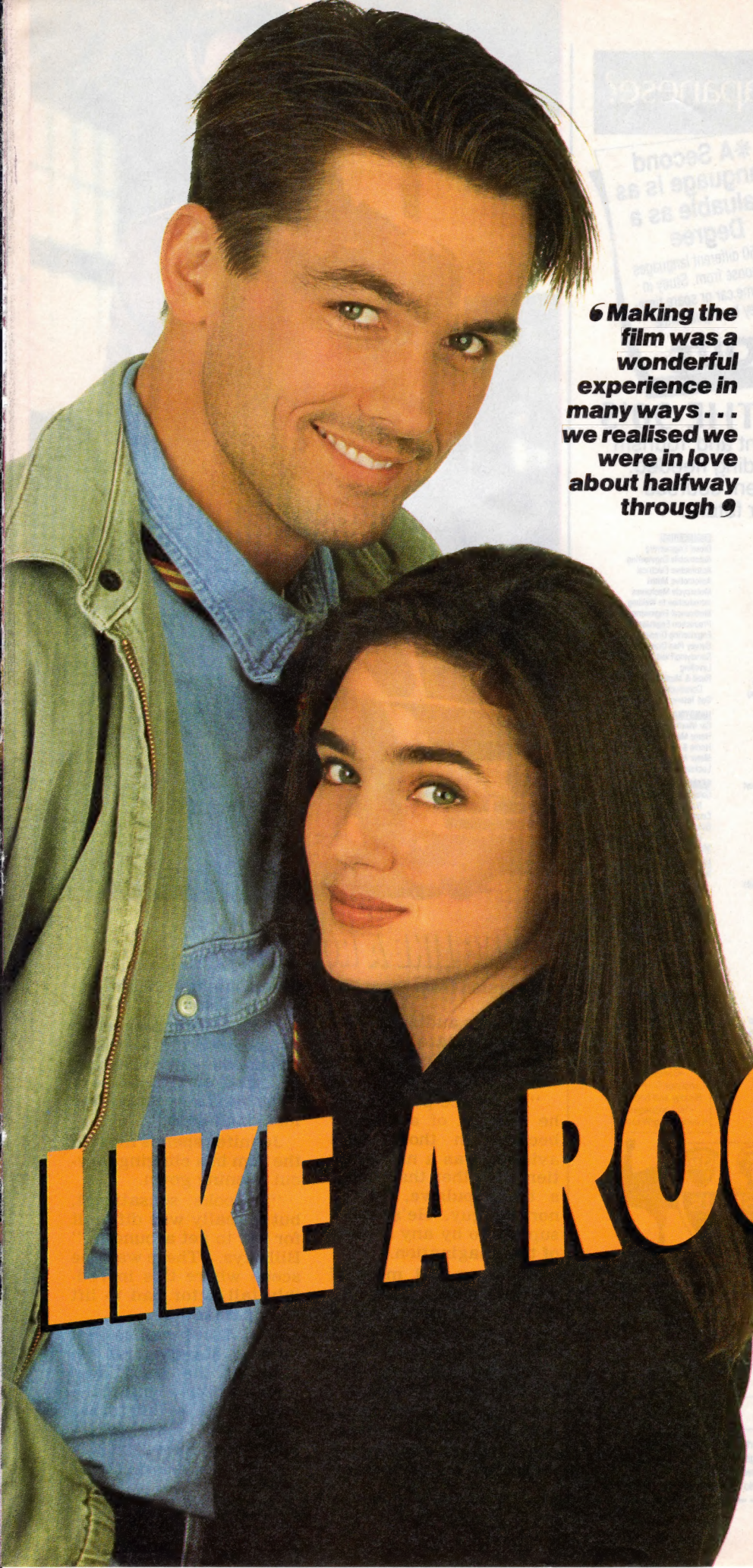
"There are two problems," Dalton says. "MGM is in deep financial trouble and Broccoli (Cubby, producer of the Bond films) is suing MGM, and until that lawsuit is resolved, there can't be another Bond film."

Dalton remains down-to-earth about the impact of the Bond movies on his career.

"I didn't think of it as anything more than a job," he says.

From Jenny Cooney in Los Angeles

GOING



“Making the film was a wonderful experience in many ways . . . we realised we were in love about halfway through”

gangsters are all after the trail-blazing rocket pack, putting Cliff and his girlfriend Jenny (Jennifer Connelly) up to their necks in danger and adventure.

The film is set in Los Angeles in 1938 and has been applauded by U.S. critics for its spectacular stunts and elaborate sets.

And, in true Hollywood style, Bill and Jennifer fell in love on the set and are now engaged.

“Making the film was a wonderful experience in so many ways,” Bill says with a grin.

“I guess we realised we were in love about halfway through the filming. It certainly made working a very pleasurable experience.”

In an unusual move for big-budget U.S. films, Bill, 31, and Jennifer, 20, were cast because they were relative unknowns.

The Rocketeer is Bill's first film. He has guested in many TV shows and is best known for an ongoing role as Steven Carrington's lover, Luke Fuller, in *Dynasty*.

Jennifer made her movie debut as a 12-year-old in *Once Upon A Time In America* and co-starred with David Bowie in *Labyrinth*.

“The director wanted to create the Rocketeer with someone who would not bring in any associations with past characters,” Bill says.

“He wanted a fresh birth, so to speak. When I was told I had the part, I nearly fainted. The joy of a break like this is just euphoric.”

Bill's contract ties him up for two Rocketeer sequels, but he's disarmingly honest when asked if he's concerned about typecasting.

“My response to that is it's like taking a starving man to a banquet and asking him if he's worried about putting on weight.

“The film surpassed all my ex-

LIKE A ROCKET!

pectations. I was absolutely thrilled when I first saw it the first time.

“The director, Joe Johnston, has the ability to appeal to the child in every adult. He comes to work as if he's a child with a big toy, and his excitement and enthusiasm seem to bring out the best in everyone.”

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GOING LIKE A ROCKET!

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Bill says audiences feel an immediate affinity with Cliff because he's "an average person".

"As a race plane pilot, he is a bit of a pioneer because in those days aviation was a new frontier, but other than being a bit impulsive, he's a normal guy. He's not a superhero by any stretch of the imagination."

Stuntmen did most of the flying sequences, but Bill and Jennifer faced their own problems, courtesy of their costumes.

Bill had to contend with the Rocketeer's helmet.

"It's an incredible looking contraption. They spent months working on its design. Unfortunately,

it was highly uncomfortable to wear.

"The lenses fogged up whenever I did anything strenuous — like breathe! So I felt at times like a Frankenstein monster lurching about."

Jennifer spends most of the film in a clinging, low-cut evening gown.

"It looks sensational, but it really was difficult for her to get around in," Bill says. "There was one scene where this incredibly tall actor had to lift her up a ladder."

"He didn't realise that he was standing on the back of the train, and when he pulled her up, the whole back of her dress came off. She really hated that dress."

Chrissie Camp